

The Digbeth Trust

Active in Turning Community Ideas
Into Community Action

CASE STUDY 2 – Fairbridge West Midlands Young Persons Guide to the City

WELCOME

This is the fourth edition of our Case Studies Series which shows how we are helping voluntary and community-based organisations to have a lasting impact in their communities.

For more than 20 years The Digbeth Trust has been supporting groups and communities to fulfil their ambitions and realise their potential.

These case studies illustrate how our staff and quality-assured consultants have helped groups with:

- Feasibility studies
- Architectural plans
- Business plans
- Income generation strategies
- Organisational development and performance improvement
- Other sources of funding and support.

The case studies also show how the grants we have made have helped groups to develop their capacity to deliver important services to their communities.

Our second case study is A Fairbridge West Midlands- supporting young people in Digbeth.

If you would like more information about how the Trust might be able to help you please contact us.

ABOUT THE DIGBETH TRUST

The Digbeth Trust is a development support organisation offering services to **voluntary and community groups** and **public and charitable funders** across the West Midlands.

Our Mission

The Digbeth Trust exists to enable the development of an influential, effective, independent and sustainable voluntary and community sector across the West Midlands through the influencing of policy and the provision of expertise.

Our Services

We provide specialist support to voluntary and community groups through our register of quality-assured consultants, link to other sources of support and access to funds.

We are a not-for-profit charitable company and a membership organisation.

To find out more about The Digbeth Trust and the services we offer please contact us at:

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In 2008 The Digbeth Trust carried out another program called Fairbridge West Midlands to support their project called Young Persons Guide to the City.

Fairbridge West Midlands encourages young people by offering them a unique combination of personal support and opportunity in a safe environment that challenges negative behaviour and recognises achievement. Opportunity in the form of a wide range of challenging and structured courses and projects and support in the form a tailor-made action plan for each young person.

Fairbridge West Midlands has been based in Birmingham for 10 years, currently operating from a centre in Digbeth. In that time the organisation has worked with 1200 young people aged 13-25 that other organisations find difficult to engage and giving them the self-confidence and skills they need to change their lives. These young people suffer from anxiety and depression and low self esteem.



Part of the process is “Planning”.



Part of the planning involves hands-on research.

BACKGROUND

One in four children living in inner cities has significant mental health problems compared with one in ten in rural areas. The project set out with 2 aims: Firstly, to challenge stereotypical views held by many of the predominantly White British young people who currently attend Fairbridge. It was clear that many of these young people held views and opinions which had been passed down to them by family and friends, usually based on hearsay having had no real opportunity to look at the facts or form their own opinions.

Secondly, Fairbridge wanted to raise their profile within the refugee and asylum seeker community to encourage a greater take up of their services. The overarching aim of the project was to bring the two groups together to share experiences, similarities and also celebrate diversity. Fairbridge West Midlands submitted a proposal to The Digbeth Trust, who received a total of 62 expressions of interest for the 2008 funding round. After being invited to submit a more comprehensive application Fairbridge West Midlands were awarded £6570 on 5th March 2009 by an independent Grant Assessment Panel.

THE PROJECT

Steve Belcher, Outreach & Development Worker for Fairbridge West Midlands, supported a group of 15 young people who live in the Heart of Birmingham Teaching PCT area to devise a 'Young Persons Guide to the City'. This guide is aimed at informing newly arrived young people to the UK (and Birmingham) about services available and includes an element of the do's and don'ts of being a young person living in the city. The format of the final product was determined during the planning process with the young people deciding it would be most appropriate on a website.



The young people visited the city Centre as part of their research



Various sites in Birmingham were investigated to explore their 'friendliness' regarding young people

ACTIVITIES

Fairbridge West Midlands initially approached the project by looking at immigration in the past. The group mainly looked at the arrival of the black, Irish and Pakistani communities to England. They watched film and news footage from the time and interestingly the group were appalled at how the newly arrived were treated and the views held by the English people. This then prompted discussion around today's experiences, looking at the difference between economic migration and seeking asylum and the reasons why people were leaving their homelands. The group decided to produce a website. The aim of this site was to provide a range of information to newly arrived young people about Birmingham. The group designed the site and spent a few days researching the topic and uploading it. They then set about contacting a range of agencies who work with newly arrived young people and gathered information for the website. They also asked about the needs of the groups and tried to tailor the website with this in mind.

FUTURE

Fairbridge West Midlands are about to embark on a partner project with InterAct. This is a project on behalf of the Citizenship Foundation. The aim of the project is to take a refugee and non refugee group of young people who will work together on a social action project. The website which has already been developed will be key to getting this project off the ground. The Mental Health Grants project has produced valuable evidence tools for Fairbridge West Midlands' up and coming work with the Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust, who are asking Fairbridge West Midlands to provide personal and social skills support to vulnerable young people who they are currently supporting.



Places of interest were also included in the guide



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